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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SECURITY INFORMATION

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COUNTRY Albania

REPORT NO. SUBJECT Voting Procedure in the
Gjinokaster Area

DATE DISTR. 30 October 1953

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THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
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1. All the people who were over the age of eighteen, both men and women, including those who had been deprived of their party cards, were eligible to vote. Before voting each one had to get a letter from the village council which stated his name, age, and eligibility to vote. All members of the village were forced to vote.
2. During the last election in 1952, two ballot boxes were set up in the elementary school in the village of Gline. The ballot boxes were painted a dark brown color and one was decorated with pictures of Enver Hoxha, Stalin, and the candidate of the local Communist Party; this ballot box was also decorated with flags. The other one was called the black ballot box and was not decorated, but it was placed near the Party ballot box.
3. Prior to voting the individual took the certificate which he had received from the village council to a committee which was in the room with the ballot boxes. He then handed the certificate to the committee who checked to see if he was registered. If everything was in order the committee gave him a black ball about the size of an olive; the individual was to close his hand and pass in front of the ballot boxes dropping the ball in the box which he desired. The individual was required to place his hand on both boxes regardless of which one he intended to drop the ball in. All voters had been informed that it was better to prefer the ballot box of the Government rather than that of the Fascists. After the individual had passed the ballot boxes, he walked with his hand open past the committee so that they could see that he had voted.
4. During the election of November 1952 no one voted against the party, but in the election of 1948 fifty people voted in the black ballot box. As a result of the negative votes in 1948, high Communist personalities came from Tirana and the District Headquarters at Gjinokaster, and gave the people a lecture in regard to voting for the Fascists. In the course of the lecture they recalled all the damage that the Fascists had done to the village during the war, as well as the many

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crimes which they claimed were committed by the Balli Kombetar in 1944. They further stated that they were going to investigate those votes and take severe action against all those who voted for the Fascists.

5. After the 1948 elections the next were held in 1950, and again a few people voted against the party. In order to prevent this, the committee, whenever they suspected a person was going to vote the black ballot box, would tell him to wait outside for awhile because something was wrong with the ballot boxes. After about five minutes, the person would be called in and permitted to vote. The voters suspected that it would be known if they voted in the wrong ballot box and as a result there were only ten negative votes in the 1950 elections.

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